



Student Name:

Advisor Name:

Date:

Setting goals and taking stock of whether you have accomplished those goals is a crucial habit to being productive, not just busy. Guided by the Individual Development Plan (IDP), formal meetings with your advisor are a chance for you to step back from your daily lab work, assess your progress, and plan for the future. Your advisor and mentors are invaluable resources to help you propose and execute next steps that will help make you a better scientist.

## HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR IDP

- 1 Step back and self-assess!**  
It's easy to lose sight of the bigger picture. Fill out this form, using these questions as a jumping off point to understand your research progress, development, and goals.
- 2 Set your annual meeting with your advisor.**  
You are responsible for scheduling annual IDP meetings with your advisor to go over your IDP, in addition to annual progress meetings with your committee. We strongly recommend you share your completed IDP form with your advisor before your meeting.
- 3 Lead the discussion.**  
The IDP covers topics students have found helpful. If you have questions or additional objectives related to your training, these meetings are a great time to bring them up.
- 4 Complete the “Action Plan” and make a plan for following up.**  
The last page of the IDP encourages you to establish concrete steps in the meeting with your advisor. Keep your Action Plan accessible and check on it every couple months.
- 5 Submit required documentation by August 1.**  
Use the form at <http://biosciences.stanford.edu/current/reporting/> to record the date the meeting occurred. (Your actual IDP and discussions remain private between you and your advisor.)

“This process sparks much needed conversations between trainees and their mentors regarding career goals, skills and interests. This kind of communication is imperative.”

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**SCIENTIFIC/RESEARCH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Do you have a clear/defined plan and endpoint for your project?

How confident are you in your ability to complete it by Year 5?

How firm a grasp do you feel you have of the field in which you work? If insufficient, what help do you need in identifying relevant readings or other means to be a true expert in your field?

What are your near-term research goals? For each goal, specify any areas where you feel you need specific improvement or additional training (e.g., the need to learn high-throughput sequencing). Include any techniques you want to learn, scientific collaborations, etc.

**CHALLENGES**

Describe any unusual or unanticipated challenges you experienced this year in trying to accomplish the goals you set out last year with your advisor.

What actions have you taken to meet these challenges?

How can your advisor help you?

Goal Setting Info: <https://bewell.stanford.edu/achieving-your-smart-health-goal/>

**Student Name:****Advisor Name:****Date:**

List your recent involvement in the past year and/or current plans you have for the following areas:

**ACADEMIC COURSEWORK/TRAINING:****TEACHING/MENTORING:****PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:****CONFERENCES:****SERVICE/OUTREACH:**

List your percentage involvement in the past year for the following areas:

**Research****Courses/Training****Teaching****Professional****Service****Wellness**

How do you see these percentages changing in the coming year?

Which experience or experiences have been most valuable to you, your research, and/or your professional goals?

Professional Info: <https://vpge.stanford.edu/professional-development/programs>

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One of the most important parts of your PhD training is to develop a skill set transferrable beyond graduation. Use this worksheet to assess and identify skills that you would like to target in the coming year, **marking your perceived current ability level from weak (1) to strong (3)** relative to where you think a student should be at the end of their PhD studies. Ask your advisor how s/he agrees or disagrees. Spaces have been provided after each section to allow you and your advisor to add any additional skill targets. An honest self-assessment and discussion will help you set your training goals.

**RESEARCH SKILLS & SCIENTIFIC THINKING**

Broad-based knowledge of science      1   2   3

Critical reading of scientific literature

Experimental design

Interpretation of data

Statistical analysis

Creativity and innovative thinking

Target  
skill**LEADERSHIP/PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

Delegating; providing instruction      1   2   3

Providing constructive feedback

Dealing with conflict

Leading and motivating others

Serving as a role model

Setting expectations

Target  
skill**WRITING**

For a scientific publication

For a research proposal

For a lay audience

Grammar/structure

Editing your own writing

**PROFESSIONALISM/INTERPERSONAL**

Identifying and seeking advice

Upholding commitments/deadlines

Maintaining positive relationships

Approaching difficult conversations

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

To a specialized audience

To a lay audience

In a classroom

One-on-one

English fluency

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Planning projects

Breaking down complex tasks

Time management

Managing data and resources

What are the top one or two skills that you plan to focus on for the next year?

Writing/Speaking Info: <https://undergrad.stanford.edu/tutoring-support/hume-center/writing/graduate-students>

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Mentoring is a distributive process, allowing you to take advantage of the talents and experiences of many people throughout your training. You may want to consider using all or some of the IDP as an impetus for conversations with each of your mentors, not just your advisor. In the space below, consider the breadth of mentoring you currently receive.

	How often are you meeting?	Is this sufficient?	Do you initiate meetings?	Need help finding or coordinating?
<b>Lead mentor</b>				
<b>Thesis committee: as a group</b> (List names)				
<b>Thesis committee: one-on-one</b>  <b>Additional mentors</b> (List names)				
<b>Collaborators</b> (List names/ roles in your research)				

What have you found most beneficial of the mentoring you have received? Is there anything that would improve the mentoring you receive?

Mentoring Info: <https://mentoring.stanford.edu>

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**PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

What are your long-term goals? (What activities do you want to be doing on a daily basis 5-10 years after graduation?)

—What professional and/or other factors inform these goals?

For each goal you listed above, identify one or two shorter-term objectives that may be important to achieving that goal.

—How will you meet these goals next year?

What guidance would help you with your development and your exploration of career options?

What features of the lab group and your relationships with colleagues are most helpful and supportive to your personal development?

Are there any factors that you are concerned may negatively affect your progress? What help can your advisor or other faculty/staff provide?

What help can your advisor or other faculty/staff provide? Indicate if you need help finding professional or personal development resources.

Your success as a student is tightly linked to your wellness. What are you doing to maintain this?

Wellness Info: <https://vaden.stanford.edu/caps-and-wellness/counseling-and-psychological-services>

Career Info: <http://med.stanford.edu/careercenter/>

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**THIS ACTION PLAN IS TO BE DEVELOPED JOINTLY BY THE GRADUATE STUDENT AND THE MENTOR DURING OR AFTER THE DISCUSSION.** Keep it accessible for your yearly IDP meetings and potential monthly check-ins, as determined by the two of you.

1

**Projected Timeline**

What is the projected timeline for completing your current projects and publishing your work? In what quarter do you expect to graduate?

2

**Target skills**

What skills (~1-2) did you identify as important development targets for the coming year?

3

**Activities**

List any activities in which you and your mentor agree you should participate to achieve your academic objectives in the coming year. For additional resources, consult the IDP section of the Biosciences website at <http://biosciences.stanford.edu/idp/>.

4

**Financial support**

If you know, what will be your financial support for the next year?

5

**Additional actions**

In order to aid your success, are there any additional actions that can be initiated or continued by you? By your mentor?

6

**Following up**

When are you and your mentor going to follow up on your IDP and progress? (An annual meeting is only the minimum required.)

7

**Other**

Is there anything else you would like to discuss with your advisor/mentors at this time?